

"New Being in Christ" is the answer. This "New Being" is experienced by an individual in a particular moment in time, when he is encountered by the God-beyond-god, the Being-beyond-being, the Ground of Being itself; and is thereby transformed in his existence. Thus Tillich asks existential questions but gives ontological answers; and therefore arrives at a theology of essence rather than a theology of existence. He is thus not really an existentialist theologian.

From these examples, as well as others, it would appear that any attempt to employ existential philosophy as a basis for theology must fail, since theology, viewed as the systematic presentation of the contents of the Christian faith, is, by definition of existentialism itself, impossible. If existence is always prior to essence, then theology ("expression concerning God" or "words concerning God") simply becomes impossible. If God has no essence, no nature, no settled character, then all God-language must of necessity be meaningless. And if God-language is meaningless, then one should cease to speak of God. Thus a genuine existentialist theology is discovered to be both logically and empirically impossible.